

# **Whittingham Parish Council**

## **Code of Practice for Handling Complaints**

It was RESOLVED on the **13<sup>th</sup> June 2011 (MIN 28/2011)** that every duly made complaint should be dealt with in accordance with the following Code of Practice, regardless of however trivial it might appear to be at first sight.

The Code of Practice was reviewed and amended in January 2018 **MIN 124**.

### **Code of Practice**

- 1) If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk, and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully, the complainant shall be requested to put the complaint in writing, by letter or email, to the Clerk. Assurances will be given that the complaint will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
- 2) If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, he or she shall be advised to email or write to the Chairman.
- 3) a) On receipt of a complaint the Clerk or Chairman, shall (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant, but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of the Clerk or a Councillor, without first notifying the person complained of - giving them an opportunity to comment on the manner in which it is intended to settle the complaint.  
  
b) Where the Clerk or Chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions, he or she shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Council.
- 4) The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
- 5) The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled, to the next meeting of the Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered. The complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.
- 6) The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of any complaint, warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
- 7) As soon as possible after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
- 8) A Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if advice is necessary from the Society of Local Council Clerks or the Lancashire Association of Local Councils. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.
- 9) If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, he may contact the City Council's Standards Committee as detailed in the attached leaflet.

**END**